The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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Make Somebody Happy in 1886.

THE shades of the evening were fading away,
And brightly was dawning the opening day;
Then softly there whispered a voice in my ear,
"Make somebody happy each day of the year."
And O, when the years with their burdens are past,
And smiling and weeping are ended at last,
Around the white throne may we gladly appear,
With happiness brought from each day of the year.

—*Sel.*

Heroes.

Here's a hand to the boy who has courage
To do what he knows to be right.
When he falls in the way of temptation,
He has a hard battle to fight.
Who strives against self and his comrades
Will find a most powerful foe;
All honor to him if he conquers,
A cheer for the boy who says, "No!"

There's many a battle fought daily
The world knows nothing about;
There's many a brave little soldier
Whose strength puts a legion to rout.
And he who fights single-handed
Is more of a hero, I say,
Than he who leads soldiers to battle,
And conquers arms in the fray.

Be steadfast, my boy, when you're tempted
To do what you know is not right;
Stand firm by the colors of manhood,
And you will o'ercome in the fight.
"The right!" be your battle-cry ever
In waging the warfare of life;
And God, who knows who are the heroes,
Will give you the strength for the strife.

—*Selected.*

SIMPLE rule and safest guiding;
Inward peace and inward light;
Star upon our path abiding;
"Trust in God and do the right."

Boliver.

YOU may have heard of General Boliver, but this was not my "Boliver."

His real name was Benjamin Oliver Dee. He wrote it the first day of school, "B. Oliver Dee," so, of course, the boys called him "Boliver" after that.

He was by far the worst-looking boy in school, sullen and scared-looking, besides being ragged and generally miserable. One would never suppose that he was once called the prettiest baby in Wintertown, and that his mother wore lovely jewelry and costly dresses, and that his father was the handsomest soldier among the volunteers.

He was not slain in battle; more's the pity, perhaps. He came home with flying colors, but soon it became known that Sergeant Dee had "taken to drinking," and by the time Boliver was eleven years old there wasn't a more wretched place to be found than that scene of cold and hunger and drunkenness that Boliver called home.

Mr. Dee was now never pleasant in his family, and when his drunken fits were upon him he was positively dangerous.

One winter night Mrs. Dee had been summoned to watch with a sick neighbor. She needed the money her services would bring. "But what shall I do with you, my boy?" said she. "He will be coming home like a tiger, and you here all alone!"

"I guess I could sleep in Labaree's stable, somewhere," said Boliver. "Away up in the hay I could hide away and be on hand at breakfast time when you are home."

"But ask Mr. Labaree's permission," said his mother.

Mr. Labaree, the stable-keeper, was a kind-hearted man. "Why, yes, boy!" said he, heartily, when he had heard Boliver's timid request. "You're welcome to the warmest corner in the loft. There's plenty of fresh, sweet straw, and if your mother doesn't get home in time for breakfast, come round to my house and I'll give you some. Come round any way," he added.

It was eight o'clock in the evening and quite still in the stable for a wonder. Most of the horses were out. It was a splendid moonlight night, and capital sleighing. The high school scholars had gone to Lexington in the "Belle of the Coast," Mr. Labaree's famous shell sleigh, and quantities of private parties were enjoying the turn-outs from the stable. The new Irish hostler, Mike Flaherty, was the only person about the premises, and he was so busy in cleaning the stalls that he did not notice the boy.

Boliver climbed the ladder to the loft in the utmost haste, thankful he could go to his lodgings without being seen by any body. He found the pile of fresh, sweet straw Mr. Labaree had told him about; and creeping quite out of sight in its golden warmth was soon snug and safe. Poor boy! *Safe*—from his father!

The moonlight night dances gayly along. The idea of anybody's wasting it in sleep! That is what the young folks thought. Far from their minds were visions of sick-beds, weary watchers, raving drunkards, and poor boys sleeping in straw. Mike Flaherty did not seem to be having a gay time, but he was thoroughly content and blessing his good luck that had brought hi safe to "Ameriky," and given him a place to work only two days after his arrival. Mike was a warm-hearted fellow as ever livrd, overflowing with kindness to every living thing. The horses under his care already knew his voice, and he had made friends with every one.

By midnight he had cleaned the stalls to his mind, and mounted the ladder, pitchfork in hand, to get some "clan swate beds for th pore craythurs."

How am I ever going to tell the terrible thing that happened? Poor Mike was not to blame. How could he know that a poor little boy was hidden under the straw fast asleep, and that when the pitchfork glanced sharply through the yellow straw it would come so near taking an innocent young life.

Hours later, Boliver lay unconscious on the bed in Mr. Labaree's spare room.

Mike, crouching behind the stable, the most pitiable object in the world, torn with remorse and expecting the gallows.

Mr. Dee, sobered by the awful calamity, had resolved never to touch liquor again.

Mrs. Dee seemed like a stone. At last when she spoke it was to say bitterly.

"Need not talk to me about a Providence and guardian angels! What were they about to let this dreadful accident happen?"

Poor woman! By and by she believed that "there are no accidents in God's kingdom."

This shocking event worked out at last a blessed result, It startled Mr. Dee into repentance and reformation. It interested Mr. Labaree in Boliver, who watched the boy's slow recovery with the greatest anxiety.

There is now a very unusual livery stable in the town of Wintertown. It is remarkable because there are no rough characters hanging about it, and profane language is never heard on the premises.

Mike and Mr. Dee and Boliver are all employed there, and Mr. Labaree boasts that his stable might be named "The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals," thanks to Mike!—*S. S Advocate.*

Bits of Time.

Wilmer Grey and his sister, Hope, have been learning how to use to advantage the odds and ends of time, and they are delighted with the result. Their home is in the city, and as they both go to school and have a large circle of young friends, they have been in the habit of thinking that they were very busy indeed.

Aunt Amabel, who lives in a large inland town, had often received short visits from her nephew and neice, but last summer she invited them to spend the vacation with her, which they did to their great profit and pleasure.

Aunt Amabel has three children of her own, a son and two daughters. Frank is about Wilmer's age, and Sophie and Hope are often told that they look like twin sisters. Little Ama, nearly six years of age, is the household pet.

"Are you taking the 'Spare-Minute Course,' Wilmer?" asked Sophie, the evening of their arrival.

"The 'Spare-Minute Course?' What may that be?" was the reply.

"It is a course of reading, and there are twenty-three little books in all, and every one is

good. Frank and I are reading them, just in the little bits of time, you know, when we wouldn't think we could begin any thing else. You and Hope must join us; it will be so nice to talk over the books together."

And so the minutes of waiting for breakfast, the idle half-hour on the piazza after tea, the odds and ends of time scattered all along through the day, were seized upon and filled with food for thought and question and conversation.

"The 'Forty-Minute Society' meets this afternoon at four o'clock," said Sophie, one day at luncheon. "You are respectfully invited to attend."

"What is it, and what does it do, and where does it meet?" asked Hope, laughing.

"It is a sort of Home Mission Society, and it is making all sorts of things to send down South to a lady sent out by the Woman's Home Missionary Society to work among the poor whites, and it meets on Nelly Foote's piazza to-day."

"Does it always meet on the piazza, and are boys allowed?" asked Elmer.

"Yes; boys are allowed. They can make themselves useful in many ways, and it meets on the piazza or in the house, according to circumstances and the weather," said Sophie.

"And why is it a 'Forty-Minute Society?'"

"Because we work forty minutes, and then have the same length of time for reading, or music, or games, just as we choose," explained Sophie. "Sometimes, when we are very zealous, we choose to work all the time, but not often."

"We must join, Hopey, said Wilmer. "I'd like to know how it feels to do something really useful, wouldn't you?"

"We boys have started a 'Vacation Tramp Society,'" said Frank; "and we have the jolliest kind of a time. Girls are allowed in our society, too."

"I like the name," said Wilmer, emphatically. "Now tell us about it."

"Well, you know what the 'Flower Mission' work is. We're too far from the city to send flowers, but we can gather ground-pine and scarlet berries and everlasting and running evergreen on our tramps, you know, and then have meetings now and then to make up wreaths and crosses and little bouquets to send to the hospitals for the holidays."

"And mamma suggests that we add a 'Boys and Girls' Fruit Mission' to this, and once a fortnight gather all the nice fresh fruit we can, and send it to the 'Fruit and Flower Mission.' I like that. You know we can gather berries, and plenty of people will give us fruit," said Sophie.

An idea came into Hope's pretty head one day. There was a Children's Hospital near her home. Once she had visited it, but she had never thought that she could do anything to make life pleasant for the poor little sufferers.

"I mean to make some pretty little things for those sick children," she said, one day, to Sophie. "I know how to make cloth rabbits and dogs and elephants and cute little mice, and I have a pattern for a pasteboard wheelbarrow and a red bird, and O! lots of things."

"I'll help," said Cousin Sophia, "and I know some girls who will help, too. We'll dress dolls, too."

And so another ball was started.

Where these loving thoughts and efforts will end, who can tell? Elmer and Hope did not leave in the country their inspiration to "Look out and not in, and to lend a hand," but the circle has gone on widening since they reached their city home.

God bless the boys and girls who are willing to use the bits of time in making other folks better and happier! Though they may not think of it they will increase their own happiness.—*S. S. Classmate.*

A Dear Bargain.

"It is a jolly knife!" said Ted admiringly.

"There are three blades beside the cork-screw," said Tom; "it could not have cost less than half-a-dollar."

"What made him give it to you?" said Ted. "I wish he had taken it into his head to give it to me."

"Why, I'll tell you," said Tom, laughing. "He's so green, you know. I gave him my red alley for it, and the medal I picked up in the road; and I told him the medal was silver and the alley was real marble and worth a lot of money, and he thinks he's got a great bargain."

"Oh," said Ted, "that alters the case. I would not have it at that price if you gave me a hundred pounds as well."

"Why not," said Tom, "if he's such a soft as to believe everything you tell him?"

"He's welcome to sell his knife how he likes," said Ted, turning on his heel, "but I would not sell my character for all the knives in the world."

For the Myrtle.

Unto Us.

THIS is our Christ, the holy gift
God offers us to-day,
Our guide in all earth's wilderness
Our life, our light, our way.

This, is the Christ who through the years
For earth-encumbered men
Hath borne the burden-weight care
And bid them hope again.

And as for all these weary hosts
He has been loving guide,
The light upon our darkened way
His mercy will provide.

Yea born to us ; a blessed trust
By God's own bounty given,
His only well beloved son
To turn our steps toward heaven. E. M B.

For the Myrtle.

The Wanderer's Beturn.

WHEN Jared Hoyt left his home five years ago, he had no idea that he should be gone as many hours as he has now been gone years.

He was a quick tempered boy, and getting suddenly angry with his mother, he rushed out of the door saying:

"I'll run away, and I wont run back again in a hurry."

He had really no intention of leaving his home, at the time that he made this rash speech. But going away, and meeting with a band of strolling musicians before his anger had abated, he caught at the proposition which they made him, to join their band and undertake to earn his living in this precarious way.

He was a very fine cornet player, loved music with all his heart, and the first days of his wanderings were pleasant days to him. It was Summer then, and the days were long and lovely. But Summer days soon gave way to Autumn, and Autumn to Winter, and then came the dreary days when sometimes cold, sometimes hungry, and all times homesick, the poor boy wished often that he had never taken up this wandering life.

It is so much easier to get into bad ways than it is to get out of them, that Jared was a long time before he saw his way clear to leave the company of strolling players, with whom he had cast in his lot.

But it happened after five years had passed, they came round again to his native town in the holiday time of the year.

It was the night before Christmas when the band of musicians stopped before the house where Jared was born, and played one of their sweet melodies.

Mrs. Hoyt, the mother, had never ceased to yearn for her lost boy. She always prayed for him when she knelt to ask God's blessing; and the key to the side door of the house, was always left where he could put his hand on it, and enter at any time of the day or night.

She was sleeping when the musicians began to play, but the sound of that cornet, reached into the land of dreams and quickened all the depths of her life.

Surely there could be no other sound like that. No one else could play that cornet as her own boy played it. It must be he beneath the window. She sprang from her bed, threw open the casement and cried aloud as only mother's can cry when their hearts are overflowing.

Another moment, and the wanderer was in her arms; now no longer a wanderer, but a son beloved, returned and welcomed by the forgiving heart which had for so many years yearned for him.

There was Christmas at the cottage such as is celebrated only when hearts at peace are offering their Thanksgiving. E. M. B.

A Rule for the New Year.

Make a rule, and pray to God to help you to keep it, never if possible to lie down at night without being able to say, "I have made one human being at least a little wiser, or a little happier, or a little better this day." You will find it easier than you think, and pleasanter. Easier, because, if you wish to do God's work, God will surely find you work to do; and pleasanter, because in return for the little trouble it may cost you, or the little choking of foolish, vulgar pride it may cost you, you will have a peace of mind, a quiet of temper, a cheerfulness and hopefulness about yourself and all around you, such as you never felt before; and over and above that, if you look for a reward in the world to come, recollect this: What we have to hope for in the life to come is to enter into the joy of our Lord. If you wish to enter into the joy of your Lord, be sure that his joy is now, as it was in Judea of old, over every sinner that repenteth, every mourner that is comforted, every hungry mouth that is fed, every poor soul, sick or in prison, who is visited.—*Sel.*

IT is a bad fireplace where all the heat goes up the chimney; true religion spreads joy over all around. Yet the fire warms first the chimney in which it burns, and grace comforts the heart in which it dwells. Nobody will be warmed by a cold hearth.

EVERYTHING we learn affects the whole character of our mind.

"Smiles When She Speaks."

The power of unconscious influence was illustrated recently by the following little incident:—

A lady called at the house of a neighbor on an errand; but, as the family were away, she asked the man in charge of the house to tell his employer that she would call again. Being in a hurry, and not thinking but that the man knew who she was, she did not leave her name. The lady of the house returned before the rest of the family, and the man told her that a lady had been there who said she would call again.

"Who was it?" inquired Mrs. H.

"Oh, I don't know her name," replied the man.

"But you should have asked her," said Mrs. H., "so we might know who had been here. Can't you think of anything by which I can tell who came? Where does she live?"

"I don't know," said the man; "but she's the one that always smiles when she speaks."

The pleasant look and the courteous manner in which this lady had spoken to the servant had been noticed and remembered, leaving a sunbeam in that man's heart. Let us each remember that religion is recommended by the way in which we treat even the servants. The command, "Be courteous," reaches to all with whom we have to do.—*The Youth's World.*

How to Know a Goose.

"Mother! mother!" cried a young rook, returning hurriedly from its first flight, "I'm so frightened; I've seen such a sight!"

"What sight, my son?" asked the old rook.

"O! white creatures—screaming and running and straining their necks, and holding their heads ever so high. See, there they go."

"Geese, my son—merely geese," calmly replied the parent bird, looking over the common. "Through life, child, observe that when you meet any one that makes a great fuss about himself, and tries to lift his head higher than the rest of the world, you may set him down at once as a goose."

THOUGH you may have known clever men who were indolent, you never knew a GREAT man who was so; and when I hear a young man spoken of as giving promise of great genius, the first question I ask about him is always, DOES HE WORK?

THE greatest of faults, I should say, is to be conscious of none.

SELECTIONS FOR A NEW YEAR CONCERT.

Wonderful White Winter.

Wonderful white winter!
We must clap our hands at you;
You are cold, and we are cold,
And there is nothing else to do.
You and I are glad, are glad,
When the snow comes flying down,
And the ice-drops fair leap out of the air
To hang on the branches brown!

Wonderful white winter!
It is when you first begin,
With berries fine the churches shine;
That is how we bring you in.
Don't you love the ding-dong bells?
Don't you love the hearty cheer,
The merry blaze, the good old plays,
When you fetch the little New Year?

Wonderful white winter!
We will make a league with you;
You must know of want and woe,
Tell us what one ought to do.
Must we feed your little birds?
Shelter to the homeless lend?
Comfort and aid the poor and afraid?
That we will, my brave old friend.

A Song in Winter.

My little bird is in the storm;
I wonder if his feet are warm;
The snow is flying 'round his head—
He has no blanket and no bed.

I wish he'd come within my door,
It seems so cold to sing and soar;
But to the gentle words I say,
He turns, and sings, and hops away.

Dear child, you yet may serve him well,
With crumbs upon the window sill;
And teach each thoughtless girl and boy
To never harm him or destroy.

"A bright, a blessed Christmas,
And a glad New Year be thine,
And may the Sun of Glory
Upon thy pathway shine;
Each season show thee clearer
The path thy Saviour trod,
And each Christmas find thee nearer
The Paradise of God!"

The Old and the New.

The old hath left us, and the new is here,
O faithful friends!
The golden promise of a fresh, bright year
Shines out upon our first glad words of cheer,
And kindly sends
Strong wings of joy in all things new
To bear us boldly on our purpose true,
The old hath left us and the new is here,
O faithful friends!

Be this the burden of our New Year's song,
In faith and prayer:
That we may glide our happy cause along
With hearts of pure intent, and hands proved strong
To do and dare;
That in our words and ways the good may shine,
A mirror burnished with a bright design:
May we reflect the right and shun the wrong.
Be this the burden of our New Year's song,
In faith and prayer.

[redacted]

The Two Angels.

Daily are two angels writing
What we do for good or ill;
One with smiles for good inditing,
One the evil, sad and still.

Where repentance boweth lowly,
Long they wait at close of day,
Blotting out the deed unholy,
Ere they bear the book away,

The Past is Past.

The past is past beyond control,
Leave it and go thy way;
To-morrow gives no pledge to thee;
Thy hope lies in to-day.

Even to-day is not all thine,
Its ending none can tell.
God gives the moments one by one;
Take them and use them well.

"Keep by the wheel, steer steadily,
Keep watch above, below;
Such hearts will make the ports they seek,
No matter what winds blow."

HARVEST PAGE.

Hidden Seed

202.—ENIGMA.

I am composed of 29 letters.
My 24, 10, 4, 29 is a kind of fish.
My 24, 19, 9, 12, 23, 20 is a dog.
My 26, 11, 7, 8 is an instrument.
My 26, 22, 18, 16 is a kind of fruit.
My 26, 6, 17, 21, 10 is a tree.
My 10, 13, 26, 18, 3, 5 is an armor.
My 1, 25, 14, 15, 27, 26, 4 is a kind of boat.
My 2, 3, 6, 28 is to elevate.
My whole is in Psalms. *M. Gertie White.*

203.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A consonant: A common drink: Whirls round:

[redacted]

comes from flax.
My whole is in Isaiah. *Molly Baker.*

205.—ANAGRAM.

Eh amce tuon sih won dan sih won cereidev mih ton.
Sarah Hoyt.

WINTER EVENING AMUSEMENT.

THE GAME OF RHYMES.

A slip of paper is given to each player, who is requested to write in one corner of it two words that rhyme.

The papers are then collected and read aloud, after which every one is expected to write a short stanza, introducing all the rhymes that have been suggested.

When the complete poems are read aloud, it is very amusing to observe how totally different are the styles adopted by the various authors, and how great is the dissimilarity that exists between the ideas suggested by each one.

CONUNDRUMS.

"Can you tell me, Bill, how it is that a rooster always keeps his feathers sleek and smooth?" "No," said Bill. "Well, he always carries his comb with him."

When may a Russian be said to take a light meal?
When he eats a tallow-candle.

198.—ENIGMA.

The North wind driveth away rain.

199.—ANAGRAM.

For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again; but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

200.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

H
H O T
H O M E S
T E N
S

201.—ENIGMA.

Defend the poor and fatherless.

OUR HARVESTERS.

Lena Wilson, 4; Lewes Christie, 7; May Christie, 7; Rose Erdman, 4; Harry Erdman, 4; Charlie Cahill, 2; Clara G. Locke, 1; Annie J. Arnold, 4; Walter Kitch, 3; Marjorie S Wellington, 7; Louis A. Rosaly, 4; John Johnston, 4.

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